

?PATHWAYS



**Your strengths and
interests, and how
to make the best
decisions for you**

YOUR STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS

**Decision
-making: years
9 and 11, career
planning and
beyond...**

At various stages in your early life, there will be times when you will need to reflect on what you want for your future. This section looks at how to make decisions and to choose from a range of possibilities.

How to decide?

In 'careers speak', there are two key concepts that help with making decisions:

'self-awareness'
– understanding yourself

'opportunity awareness'
– understanding your options

It is important to focus on your individual situation – don't choose something just because your friends are doing it, because other people think you should do it or because you like a particular teacher or classmate.

Young people succeed best when they choose options that match their **strengths and preferences**. To develop and excel in areas that match your individual potential is to lay the groundwork for future success.



YOUR STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS

So how does
this work?

Self-awareness



Opportunity
awareness



What do you enjoy?



What does the
subject / job offer?

What are you good at?



What does the
subject / job ask for?

Let's look at this in a bit more detail...

YOUR STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS

SELF AWARENESS



How do you know what you **enjoy**?

- » Which **subjects** do you like most and why is this?
- » What are your **hobbies** and **interests**?
- » What is important to you – your **values** and **beliefs**?
- » Are there things you want to **try** or to **develop**?
- » How has careers education / work experience helped you understand what **motivates** you?

- » What are the **subjects** you do **best** in?
- » What would your friends and relatives say is **great** about you?
- » Any **extra-curricular achievements**?
- » How was your feedback from **work experience**?
- » Are you more practical / academic / creative / methodical..?

How do you **know** what you are good at?

YOUR STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS

OPPORTUNITY AWARENESS



What does the option subject / job **involve**?

» Carefully **consider** the course / job **description**

» Would you **enjoy** all elements? How to **deal** with those liked not so much?

» Does the opportunity **match** what is important to you / your **values** and **beliefs**?

» Does the course / job lead on to preferred **higher qualifications** or **career development**?

» What do you have to do to **complete** the course / do the job?

» Do these requirements **match** your abilities / your skillset?

» Are you personally **motivated** to do all the activities and tasks involved?

» Will you be able to **maximise your potential** with this pathway?

What does the option subject / job **ask of you**?

YOUR STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS



Think about your personality, interests, values and skills.

Ask teachers in school, your **friends, family,** employer(?) and contacts in the community for their input also.

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School and college **booklets and prospectuses, websites and careers resources** can help you to explore and understand the pros and cons of different options.

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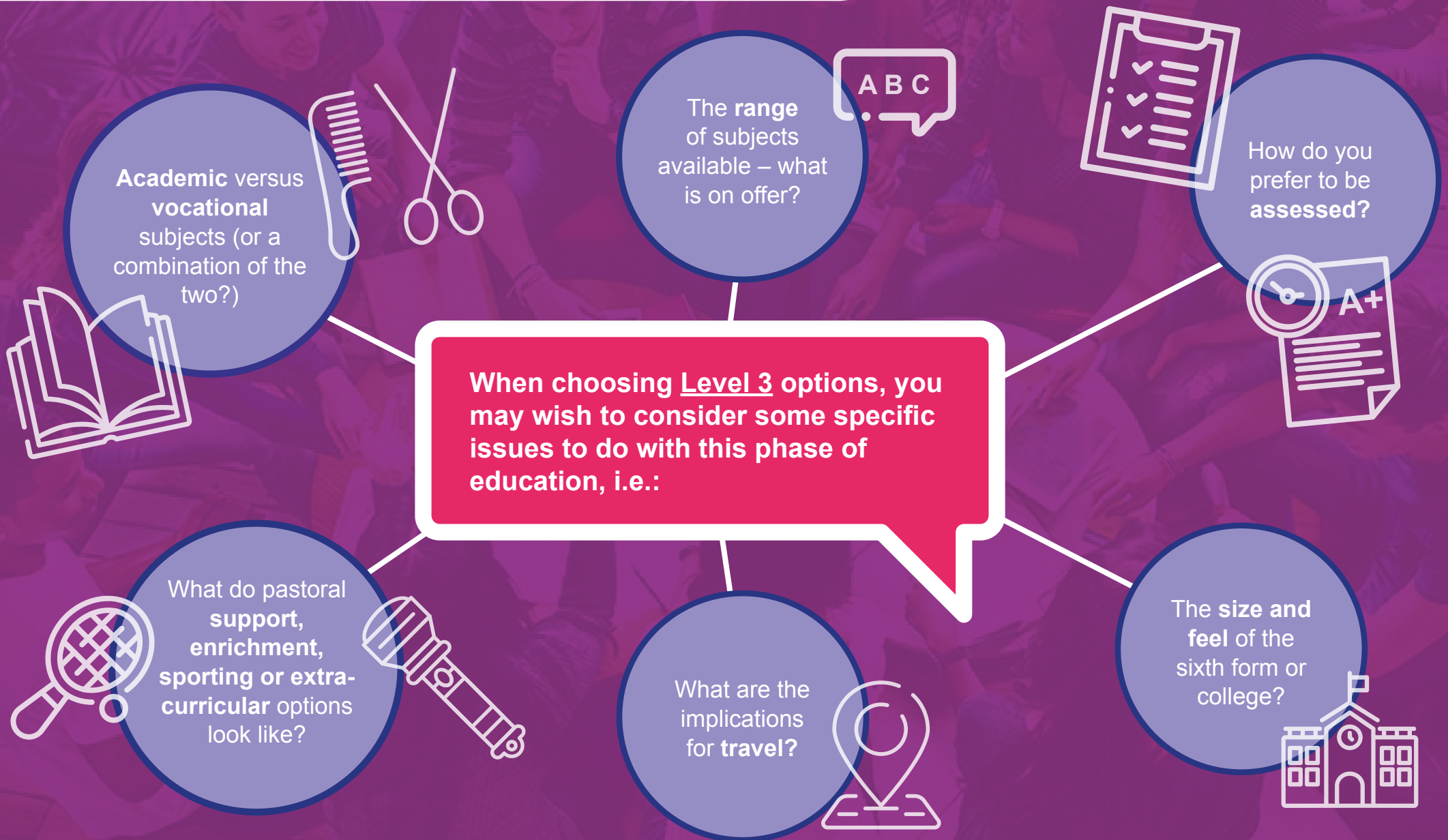


Speak to people whom you trust and who know you well. (They won't always be right – you know and understand yourself best), but if a few people are saying similar things it is worth giving their feedback some consideration.

How do I know the answers to these questions?

You can start by drawing a **mind map, list or chart** to get some ideas going.

YOUR STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS



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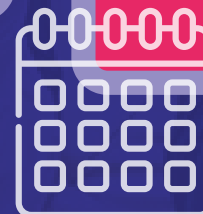
Support to make decisions in Year 11

Your school should deliver careers education to its students and offer you access to a 'one to one' with a careers adviser.

WWW.

Schools usually invite sixth-forms and colleges in to take part in a **careers or 'post-16' event** – this is an excellent opportunity to have a chat with further education staff about their colleges and courses; you can collect booklets and prospectuses at these events, and make a note of websites and other online resources that can help.

Sixth-forms and colleges hold '**open days**' when you can visit their premises (in person or virtually) to find out more about courses, campuses and student support. N.B. some of the sixth forms hold their events quite early in the autumn term of year 11, so make sure you enquire early!



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